

# SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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## Negro Churchmen Challenge White Churchmen

Condensed from *Negro Churchmen Speak to White Churchmen*, published by Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N.Y. 10c

The Christian scriptures and the declarations of principle issued from time to time by international and national church bodies, as well as pronouncements of separate communions, all accept the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as the foundation stones upon which the structure of a Christian society should rest. All Christian church bodies recognize the Christian Bible as authoritative on all matters of the Christian faith. Over and above the texts themselves, the Christian faith immortalizes those historic figures who exemplify in their persons the religion of Christ.

In recent decades science has agreed with religion and has established as objective fact that which the Christian religion established as subjective truth centuries ago—that God hath made all men of one blood. The common ancestry of man is no longer doubted by competent scholars.

### WHY RACIAL PREJUDICE?

I can choose what to eat,  
I can choose what I'll wear,  
But I had no choice when I was born  
Would my face be dark or fair.

I can choose to stay here,  
I can choose to go there,  
But for mother's arms I could not choose  
That her skin be dark or fair.

White, Yellow, Black or Red,  
Caucasian, Mongol, Jew —  
My color and my race were planned by God,  
I had no choice — did you?

— Faith Else Cummings

Racism is a modern concept. Efforts have been made through the years to connect it with a divine origin. Reference has been made to Bible history and to the Noachian curse on Ham. Subsequent study has demonstrated the fallacy of such views. Neither the ancient world nor the Middle Ages knew of races as the modern age visualizes them.

Recent studies in anthropology, sociology, psychology, biology, history and other social sciences reveal no support for the doctrine of racism and no support for the doctrine of a "superior" or "inferior" race.

Every argument previously advanced to prove the inferiority of the Negro, as a Negro, as well as that of other races, has had to be abolished in the light of the findings of modern science. Science has long since proved that there is no correlation between the shape of one's head, the texture of one's hair, the size of one's lips, and intelligence — none between intelligence and the weight of the brain.

The Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Federal Constitution rest upon the principles enunciated in the Christian religion and in science. Our Federal Constitution specifically forbids discrimination on the ground of color, creed or race.

Standing therefore on the solid rock of Christianity, science and democracy, Negro churchmen speak to white churchmen.

On the issues of race relations today the churches are weak in most sections of America. They are weak because they all

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## Conscription Hopes Fade

It begins to look as if the battle staged by the people of America to prevent adoption of peacetime compulsory conscription for military training might succeed. The struggle has not ended, but hopes for the defeat of the measure are brighter. At the conclusion of four days of hearings of opponents of the measure late in February, Chairman Andrew J. May of the House Military Affairs Committee announced that the committee would take up the Martin Resolution (H.R. 325) before making its report. The Martin Resolution provides that "before the United States adopts compulsory military service" the President and Edward R. Stettinius, American representative on the UNO, be asked to work for immediate international agreement for abolition of conscription. Congressman Matthew M. Neeley (W. Va.) has introduced House Joint Resolution 269 to convene an international conference to consider atomic energy, reduction of armaments and military personnel. Another measure, House Concurrent Resolution 106, introduced by Homer D. Angell (Oregon) seeks the creation of machinery within the UNO for international control and reduction of armaments. A similar measure (HCR 115) by Congresswoman Emily Taft Douglas was introduced on December 17. On the same date Jerry Voorhis (California) introduced House Joint Resolution 292, to abolish "compulsory universal peacetime military training and service" by international agreement, and also House Concurrent Resolution 117 to invoke the provisions of the United Nations Charter on arms limitation. Senator Clyde R. Hoey (North Carolina) introduced Senate Joint Resolution 126 on December 6, identical with the Voorhis H. J. 292. Senator Glen H. Taylor (Idaho) has introduced S.R. 183, instructing our UNO delegates to seek wide agreements for limitation of armaments, abolition of compulsory military training and conscription and for the establishment of a world republic.

One of the most important moves toward disarmament was made by Senator Millard R. Tydings (Maryland) on January 28, when he introduced S.R. 219, asking the President to invite the governments of all nations to a conference with the single purpose of entering into an understanding and agreement to achieve world disarmament on land and sea and in the air by 1950, except for such forces as shall be needed by UNO. Reports from Washington indicate that the speech of Senator Tydings, who is an influential figure, aroused great interest among his colleagues and won wide approval.

The chief hope of supporters of conscription now is the American Legion plan which would draft every boy when he reaches the age of 18 for a year of military training to be completed by the time he is 20. Each individual would be given four months of intensive training, with several options (ROTC in college, service in the National Guard or organized reserves or regular army) for the remainder of the period of one year.

On February 25, Congressman Carl Vinson (Georgia) announced that he would introduce a bill to recruit 600,000 troops for occupation duty, 400,000 for Germany and 200,000 for Japan and Korea, with a minimum base pay of \$94 per month. Said Mr. Vinson, "The American people know that the occupation troops have got to stay, but they don't see why a boy ready for college should be drafted in peacetime. Voluntary enlistments are the answer. The country just won't stand for the draft much longer." This opinion coincides with other Washington reports that the Selective Service Act may not be extended beyond May 15, 1946.




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### Lest We Forget

J. B. HUNTER

1. A new age began on August 6, 1945 — the atomic age
2. Warfare with big conscript armies ended that day. Universal military conscription is now sheer lunacy.
3. The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT — the load of 2000 B-29s.
4. The scientists who made the bombs are sad. One says he cannot sleep. Another said his hands dripped blood.
5. Dr. Harold Clayton Urey, of the University of Chicago, one of the leading atomic scientists, recently told the American Forum of the Air that in event of another war the belligerents will destroy all of each other's principal centers within the first hour of hostilities. Hanson W. Baldwin, military expert of the *New York Times*, says that the atomic bomb calls for a re-study of all our plans for defense.
6. General Arnold recently said, "We must not fail to strike down any future aggressor nation before it gets dangerous." Who would be the aggressor in that case?
7. America is still manufacturing atomic bombs. Are we preparing to fight one of the "big Five" with whom we are pledged to preserve world peace? If so, which one? And for what reason?
8. Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland has introduced S. 219 authorizing the President to call a conference of nations for the one purpose of achieving worldwide disarmament by 1950. If your Senator is for that bill he deserves your encouragement. If he is opposed to it and favors universal conscription he needs a warning letter saying, "Man is not made to fight atomic energy or to go to war against the sun."
9. In spite of protests from the National Education Association, the Federal Council of Churches, organized labor and scores of other organizations, high ranking army men, the American Legion, and certain business interests are trying to force upon America the most characteristic feature of Fascist rule — military conscription. Keep letters of protest going to the House Military Affairs Committee and the Congressman from your district.
10. Dr. Donald DuShane told the House Military Affairs Committee that the annual cost of conscription would provide:
  - a. A ten room modern school building for every county in the United States.
  - b. A \$50,000 library in every county in the United States.
  - c. A \$150,000 hospital in every county.
  - d. Ten full-time school and public health doctors and ten public health nurses for every county.
  - e. A psychiatric clinic for every county.
  - f. Ten full-time recreation and juvenile guidance workers for every county.
  - g. Bring all schools in the nation up to a reasonable standard of efficiency.
  - h. Provide free education for three million children under eighteen who are not now attending school. The National Educational Association is now asking Congress for \$300,000,000 a year for this purpose.

## Federal Aid to Sectarian Schools Proposed

All persons who believe that sectarian schools should not be the recipients of grants of public funds will do well to be advised that legislation to accomplish that purpose has been introduced in Congress. A bill (H.R. 3002) has been introduced in the House by Representative John Lesinski, of Michigan, and referred to the Committee on Education, which would authorize an annual appropriation of \$550,000,000 to the states as grants-in-aid to education; \$300,000,000 for current expenses and educational improvements, of which 75% must be used for teacher's salaries; \$100,000,000 for special educational services, such as transportation, libraries, textbooks, visual aids and health facilities; and \$150,000,000 for scholarships, stipends and wages for needy students. The states would be required to use the funds without discrimination because of race, color or creed. The states receiving such grants would be required to maintain their own educational expenditures at the level of June 30, 1942, and would retain entire control of education within their domain. The same bill has been introduced in the Senate as S. 717 under the joint sponsorship of Senator James M. Mead of New York and Senator George D. Aikin of Vermont.

The very excellent cause which these bills are designed to serve is seriously damaged by certain features of the proposed legislation. For example, "non-public" (i.e. private) schools would share in all appropriations except amounts designated for teacher's salaries. Section 6, specifically provides that federal funds can be used for "non-public" as well as public schools. The bill further provides that appropriations can be made to "non-public" schools even though state laws specifically forbid the disbursing of public funds to sectarian schools. Under the bill, in making grants to "non-public" schools the federal government would take into account "the extent to which the burden of educational needs" of the states are borne by sectarian schools.

One need not lay himself open to the charge of religious prejudice in order to point out the obvious dangers of such a bill. To be perfectly plain about it the bill is designed to enable parochial schools to share in public educational funds. As is well known, this is an end long sought by some groups. Since the Roman Catholic Church is the principal religious body in America maintaining parochial education this bill would be a boon to that church. The \$100,000,000 for special educational services (transportation, libraries, textbooks, visual aids, health facilities, etc.), the \$150,000,000 for scholarships, stipends and wages for needy students, and \$75,000,000 of the \$300,000,000 for educational expenses — a total of \$325,000,000 — would be available for sharing with sectarian schools. Even parochial school buildings could be erected with public funds, with the title to the property remaining in the name of the bishop of the diocese. All persons who are opposed to opening the door for church participation in public school funds should write at once to Representative Graham A. Barden (North Carolina), chairman of the House Education Committee, expressing their views. Representative Max Schwabe (Missouri), a member of the committee, is a Disciple. For the Senate Education Committee, write Senator James E. Murray or Senator J. William Fulbright.

Fortunately, we are not restricted to the Lesinski bill for federal aid to education. Congressman Ramspeck of Georgia, before his resignation from Congress to accept another post, introduced H.R. 1296 to provide \$300,000,000 a year for federal aid to states for schools "by public agencies and under public control." This bill is supported by the National Education Association. Grants would aid to raise salaries of teachers, relieve overcrowded classes and serve to keep schools open not less than 160 days per year. A weakness of the bill is that it provides only that separate schools for minority races should have "a just and equitable apportionment" rather than on either a per capita basis or the basis of need. In many states, especially in the South, Negro, sharecropper and mountain schools represent by far the greatest need of aid.



## On Social Frontiers

The Bureau of Internal Revenue reports that total federal liquor taxes for the fiscal year 1945 amounted to \$2,370,000,-000. This is equivalent to five cents of every dollar of federal income. In view of these figures, which do not include local and state taxes, it seems probable that the American people are spending somewhere between eight and ten billion dollars per year for liquor. Americans should remember that no nation can drink itself into prosperity.

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The Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives has recently published a 742-page report prepared by its technical staff entitled, "Issues in Social Security." The report is of particular interest to church leaders because it recommends inclusion of lay employees of churches and religious organizations under Old Age and Survivors Insurance. The report urges that these employees be included because their needs are indistinguishable from the needs of other employees now covered; because many of these employees do not have the same protection that the government requires business to give to its workers; because these workers should be covered in case of shift of jobs, and because inclusion would have an important effect on the status of the church as a good employer. Since social security payments are held in a trust fund and are not general revenue, the report declares that the inclusion of lay church personnel would not constitute an interference by the state in the work of the church. It is argued that it would be in the same category as tax assessments for paving or other special purposes. Most pointedly, the report declares that the churches give better coverage to their ministers than to their lay workers.

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The idea of non-segregated churches where people can worship together without regard to race or color is being widely adopted. In addition to groups previously described in these columns in Detroit and San Francisco, Fellowship Church in St. Louis, Mo., has recently come to our attention. An interdenominational, interracial congregation, it meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at four o'clock in Centennial Christian Church. The movement is sponsored by some of the influential ministers and church leaders of the city, including A. Preston Gray, pastor of Centennial Church, Dr. Clark Walker Cummings, executive secretary of the Metropolitan Church Federation, Dr. E. P. Inglis, pastor of Webster Groves Congregational Church, and Rev. John W. Flucke, pastor of Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church. Fellowship Church owns no property and employs no staff. It has no membership roll and no dues. It is made up of people of all races who desire to worship together. Recent speakers have been Bishop William Scarlett, of the Episcopal diocese of St. Louis, Dr. B. F. Hall, president of the Metropolitan Church Federation, and Cleo W. Blackburn, of Indianapolis, Indiana.

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On February 1, 1946, the Bureau of Internal Revenue released figures on production of beer for the period July 1 - December 31, 1945. During that period U. S. brewers produced 45,971,737 barrels of beer—1,425,123,847 gallons—using 2,130,659,295 pounds of corn products, malt, rice, wheat, barley, sorghum, sugar, soy beans, hops and other materials. At the federal tax rate of \$8 per barrel brewers paid the government \$350,842,824 on the 43,855,353 barrels withdrawn for sale. The foodstuffs used was equivalent to more than a million tons. Thoughtful people cannot fail to ask why brewers should be allowed to use grain at the rate of more than two million tons a year for the production of beer when millions of people are starving for food. During the same six-month period distillers produced 154,134,091 gallons of distilled spirits—whiskey, brandy, rum and gin. Tax-paid withdrawals amounted to 87,309,698 gallons, on which was paid (at the rate of \$9 per gallon), \$785,787,282. Thus in a single six months the brewing and distilling industries paid into the federal treasury on alcoholic beverages produced a sum equal to one-half the figure given for the full year in the first paragraph of this column.

## Notice Re: Shipments to Philippines

Word has been received from several churches that shipments of clothing and medical supplies to the Philippine Islands in response to an appeal sent out on behalf of the Philippine Committee have been returned to the senders. Investigation reveals that while shipping instructions given in the appeal were correct at the time, regulations covering parcel post to the Philippines have been changed three times in the past three months, due to the lack of transportation and storage facilities at the disposal of the Philippine Government. Postal authorities advise that where packages are returned that portion of the wrapper showing the name and address of the sender, the name and address of the person to whom sent, and the cancelled postage should be carefully removed and presented to the post office for redemption of the postage paid on account of "No Service Rendered."

The latest directive covering shipments to the Philippines is Order No. 30, 146, dated December 27, 1945, which provides that no packages exceeding 11 pounds in weight or more than 18 inches in length or 42 inches in length and girth combined will be accepted. Not more than one parcel per week may be sent by the same sender to the same addressee. Where church groups desire to send more than one package it is suggested that they be sent in the name of different persons. Thus each member of a committee or missionary society can send one package. However, in view of the changes that have been made in regulations it is recommended that inquiry be made at the main post office (not a sub station) before mailing packages. Pastors should bring this information to the attention of Council and missionary groups for their guidance.

## Carothers to Yugoslavia

J. Edwin Carothers, missionary-in-training for rural work in China, who has been for some months serving as forester for the Alpine Presbyterian Mission at Alpine, Tennessee, sailed from New Orleans on S. S. Zona Gale for Yugoslavia on February 9, in charge of a shipment of brood mares destined for that country. This is a part of the program of the Brethren Service Committee and the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction to restore the cattle and stock of the devastated areas. Mr. Carothers expects to be gone about eight weeks. Mrs. Carothers (nee Susan Nickell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Nickell, of Hazel Green Academy) will remain at Alpine, where she assists in young people's work and also carries certain duties at nearby Livingston Academy.

## Films on Social Issues Available

The Department of Financial Resources of The United Christian Missionary Society announces three 16mm. films available dealing with social issues.

The first is NOW THE PEACE, a picture tracing the growth of world organization from the League of Nations to the United Nations Organization. Scenes from the work of the League, the steps toward a new world organization, including the work of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and the San Francisco Conference, are shown. Running time 20 minutes. Rental \$2.50 plus return postage.

Another new film is the 16mm. two-reel sound film, THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, the true story of an American boy of Italian ancestry, living in a polyglot neighborhood of a great American city. Tony is influenced by a typical home missions pastor, preventing his becoming a juvenile delinquent, and directing him toward responsible citizenship in the development of his natural leadership. Time: 20 minutes. Rental \$3 plus return postage.

EVEN IN THE SHADOW OF OUR SCHOOLS is the title of an effective 16 mm. silent temperance film. While it is not a new production its message is timely. Made by a professional camera man, it depicts the constant exposure of school children to liquor advertising, by radio in the home, in the newspapers, on the streets and in the stores, and even from the windows of the school building. Time: 15 minutes. Rental 75c and return postage.



## State Hospital for Alcoholics Urged

Stirred to action by the increasing number of traffic deaths in Indiana cities due to drunken pedestrians and drunken and drinking drivers, a group of citizens of that state are planning to ask the next session of the General Assembly to construct and operate a state hospital for alcoholics, according to the Indianapolis News. According to that newspaper, fourteen persons were killed in traffic accidents in Indianapolis between January first and February 22, all but four of which involved the use of alcohol. The plans for the proposed institution would provide for its construction and operation by use of funds received from state liquor licenses.

According to Judge John L. Niblack of the Municipal Court, there is a relation between alcoholism and traffic deaths. This is a fact that has long been known to students of the alcohol problem and one that is recognized by the National Safety Council. Judge Niblack, who has recently made a study of the effect of drinking on the traffic toll, declares that the two sections of the city most frequented by persons coming before the courts on charges of drunkenness are also the sections in which the greatest number of fatal accidents occur. Of the ten persons in whose death liquor was a factor, five were pedestrians and four were drivers. The four deaths in which alcohol was not involved were all of aged persons who were run down in the street. Under Indiana law drunkenness is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and/or a sentence up to 180 days on the State Farm, though drunken driving is a more serious offense. A fatal accident while driving under the influence of liquor involves still more serious charges.

It seems likely that the nation may face a serious situation in regard to alcoholism with the return of millions of service men and women, many of whom, but by no means all, succumbed to the ever-present temptation to become users of alcohol. The establishment of state hospitals for alcoholics where they can receive the best medical and psychiatric treatment has long been urged by authorities in the field. It is to be hoped that the movement now on foot in Indiana will be approved by the General Assembly and that a special tax on brewers, distillers, wholesale and retail liquor dealers will be imposed to pay the costs of construction and maintenance of the institution.

## Logansport Civilian Public Service Unit to Close

The Civilian Public Service Unit which has been located at the State Mental Hospital at Logansport, Indiana for more than a year under the sponsorship of the Department of Social Welfare was closed as of March 2, 1946. This action was taken in harmony with the wishes of the institution and of the members of the Unit who felt that since that date marked the expiration of six months beyond the end of hostilities their service should likewise close. In harmony with this decision on the part of the management of the institution and the men notification was given to Selective Service through the National Service Board of Religious Objectors asking that our responsibility cease as of March 2. It should be stressed however that this does not mark the end of our responsibility for Disciples of Christ in Civilian Public Service. Last reports showed that whereas approximately 45 percent of the men in the armed forces have been discharged, not more than 25 percent of the men Civilian Public Service have been released. There is some talk that Congress may refuse to extend the Selective Service law beyond May 15, when it will expire without further legislation. In such an event our responsibility would end at that time. If however the draft law is extended men now in Civilian Public Service will be retained until such time as they are discharged on the point system. Harmon Wilkinson, a member of the Hollywood-Beverly Church, Los Angeles, served as assistant director of the Logansport Unit until his transfer to Philadelphia to assist in editing a study of conditions in mental hospitals as discovered by the CPS program. Ivan H. Grigsby, of Lynwood, California, was his successor.

## Negro Churchmen Challenge White Churchmen

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too frequently deny fellowship across racial lines. Too often our churches are not churches of God but churches of men, of custom, of tradition, and of the *mores*. It should be that when a member of any racial group crosses the threshold of the house of God, he is subject only to the laws of God. Freedom of worship, if it means anything, means freedom to worship God across racial lines and freedom for a man or a woman to join the church of his or her choice, irrespective of race. Segregated churches fall short of the requirements of the Christian ideal. The Church is obligated to go further than hotels, theatres, government, restaurants, social clubs, and political parties.

The basic issue in an open door church is not whether Negroes and other racial groups would pour into white churches in large numbers or whether white people would crowd out Negro churches; nor is the issue what advantages or disadvantages might accrue to the various races if the Church were an open door. It is beside the point to raise such questions. There is only one issue. Can any church be basically Christian that denies fellowship or membership on the ground of color or race? The Church must make up its mind on this issue to do the Christian thing and leave the consequences to God. When the Church presents the open door we may still have what we call Negro and white churches and they may be separate churches; but not racially segregated churches.

What is to be gained by an open door church? The Church sets the pattern for the other institutions of society. It is also a matter of its own integrity. Either the Church must be actually and potentially a Church for all the people, irrespective of race and color, or it should cease to proclaim the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. If the Churches cannot do this they should be honest with themselves and say that in the area of race relations we cannot preach and practice the whole Gospel.

At the close of World War I race riots broke out, both in the North and in the South. There were many reasons. The Negro had been led to believe that he was fighting to make the world safe for democracy. He experienced democratic treatment in Europe and particularly in France. The President and Negro and white leaders led Negroes to believe that things were going to be better on their return to this country. But conditions were not better; in many instances they were worse. There was little or no indication of the intention of Government or the American people to improve the Negro's condition after World War I. Hopeful expectation was met with determined resistance on the part of many white Americans.

Many of the post-war proposals we hear about today are proposals to maintain the status quo. The Church cannot escape the responsibility of declaring the judgment of God upon men whenever and wherever social evils and economic wrongs appear. To the minister of Christ the time is always ripe to correct a wrong. Ministers, both Negro and white, must do more than urge Negroes, Jews and other racial minorities to be patient. The time is ripe now to make changes that make for justice, democracy and brotherhood, to equalize educational and work opportunities, to administer justice in the courts, to give the ballot equally to all citizens, to provide opportunities for all to live in a healthy environment and to guarantee equal access to health and hospitalization.

Let us not deceive ourselves. Our social and racial ills do not necessarily grow out of ignorance of the teachings of the Christian religion, science and democracy. Human beings can know what is right and fail to do it. We have assumed too long that the conflict between man and man, race and race, is based upon ignorance. However informed man may become, he will continue to need the Gospel that calls him to repentance and to complete submission to God's will. The mind, the heart and the will of man must be changed. And this is the power of the Gospel of Christ and the task of the Christian ministry.